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Statement from Rep. Gary Miller on the SKILLS Act

Washington, D.C. – Today the House passed H.R. 803, the Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills (SKILLS) Act.

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was enacted into law to overhaul federal job training and assistance programs. Essential to the WIA was the establishment of one-stop career centers, which provide a variety of employment-related resources and services, including career counseling, interview and job training, job placement, and resume writing assistance, for job-seekers at one central location.

The SKILLS Act eliminates or consolidates 35 workforce development programs into one fund that will distribute money for job training and workforce development programs to the states.

Following today's House vote, Rep. Gary Miller issued the following statement:

“Growing our economy and helping people get back to work in the Inland Empire is my number one priority in Congress. At a time when unemployment remains stubbornly high, it is important that those who need help finding a job have access to the critical resources they need to do so.

I strongly support the intent of the legislation to reduce duplication and increase efficiency in government programs. I am also glad that it will continue to provide level funding for workforce development and training during this time when so many of our friends and neighbors are struggling to find work. Unfortunately, language in the bill that turns these programs into a block grant for Sacramento to dole out was a poison pill for me, and so I reluctantly opposed its passage today.

Earlier this week, I met with representatives from the County of San Bernardino Workforce Investment Board. The Board oversees three one-stop career centers, which provide essential job-training, career counseling and other employment-related services to tens of thousands of residents every year. I agree with them that this legislation, while well-intended, will impact the ability of our local career centers to continue to provide these vital services to our region's most vulnerable citizens.

Despite my concerns with this bill, I believe that it is important that we reauthorize these essential job training programs for San Bernardino County residents looking for help while continuing to find responsible ways to streamline government services. I will continue to work with all sides to get this done.”

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